Ward Cove
Waterbody Recovery Plan Update
July 1999

This document provides information about the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's plans to develop a Waterbody Recovery Plan for Ward Cove. This information is provided as a separate supplement to the information contained in EPA's Proposed Plan for the KPC Marine Operable Unit.

ADEC plans to draft a Waterbody Recovery Plan (WRP) for Ward Cove for public and agency review by September 2000. The WRP will identify all sources of pollution and list options to meet water quality objectives. The WRP will consider both point sources (identifiable discharge outlets), and nonpoint sources (such as diffuse overland runoff) of pollution. The WRP will also help prospective developers determine what types of discharges will have the least impact on the cove.

A WRP is needed for Ward Cove because the cove is on Alaska's Section 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies. Ward Cove is an impaired waterbody because it does not meet the state's water quality standards for sediment toxicity, dissolved oxygen and residue. A WRP can include a "total maximum daily load" (TMDL) that establishes pollutant limits for those parameters that exceed the state water quality standards. A waterbody remains on the 303(d) list until it meets water quality standards or a TMDL is developed for the pollutant parameters for which the waterbody is listed.

ADEC will use the information from the Ward Cove Sediment Remediation Project as a starting point in developing the Ward Cove WRP. The sediment project will address the sediment toxicity issue within the Ketchikan Pulp Company Marine Operable Unit and will thus be a key element of the WRP. Sediment toxicity is the most significant environmental threat in Ward Cove. EPA and ADEC believe that in time the sediment cleanup in Ward Cove from the sediment project will attain the state water quality standard for sediment toxicity.

The other key elements of the WRP will include developing options to address the dissolved oxygen (DO) and residue pollutant parameters. The WRP will address these parameters because EPA's preferred alternative in the proposed plan for the Marine Operable Unit focuses on sediment toxicity. The sediment cleanup project will require removal of sunken logs only in areas where dredging is necessary to maintain navigational depths in Ward Cove. (Details of EPA's decision on the rationale for not removing the majority of the sunken logs are found in an April 21, 1999 EPA memorandum).

The listing of a waterbody on the 303(d) list does not by itself prohibit the permitting of facilities

that are expected to discharge into that waterbody, and the WRP will discuss options for future permitting in Ward Cove. For example, if a new discharge from a facility will not affect a listed pollutant parameter, the facility could be issued a permit in the same way that any other facility is issued a permit for a specified discharge.

If a discharge has the potential to affect a listed pollutant parameter, then the discharge must either meet TMDL conditions (if a TMDL is developed for a given parameter), or meet state water quality standards at the point of discharge. Additional detail on permitting options and regulatory requirements for Section 303(d) listed waterbodies will be incorporated in the WRP.

The WRP will be developed with affected stakeholders. Stakeholders include KPC, the City of Ketchikan, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, EPA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Ward Cove seafood processor, environmental groups, and interested citizens. The WRP will include a schedule that will list opportunities for stakeholder participation. For further information on the Ward Cove WRP please contact:

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